

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1895

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 4840

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, ID

SUBJECT: INDONESIAN TRADE UNION DELEGATION TO ATTEND
MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS IN MOSCOW

1. SUMMARY: A FOUR-MAN INDONESIAN TRADE UNION DELEGATION HEADED BY AGUS SUDONO WILL ATTEND THE MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS IN MOSCOW. THE SOVIETS HAD PRESSED FOR SUCH A VISIT AND THE PRESSURE WAS REINFORCED DURING THE RECENT VISIT TO INDONESIA BY SOVIET DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER FIRYUBIN. FINAL DECISION WAS MADE BY PRESIDENT SUHARTO, REPORTEDLY AFTER LISTENING TO ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF IT BY GENERALS MURTOPO AND YOGA. SUDONO WILL LEAVE MOSCOW ON MAY 2 TO ATTEND A MEETING IN KUALA LUMPUR. END SUMMARY.

2. A FOUR-MAN FBSI (ALL INDONESIA LABOR FEDERATION) DELEGATION HEADED BY ITS GENERAL CHAIRMAN, AGUS SUDONO, WILL DEPART FROM JAKARTA ON APRIL 24 TO ATTEND THE MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS IN MOSCOW. THE OTHER THREE DELEGATES ARE MEMBERS OF THE FBSI BOARD, S. IDRIS,
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T R SIAGIAN AND KARTO HARDJONO. NONE OF THESE THREE

IS PROMINENT IN THE INDONESIAN LABOR MOVEMENT OR PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN IT.

3. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION FURNISHED US LABATT BY SUDONO AND BY GANI SAMIL, MANPOWER DEPT CHIEF FOR FOREIGN RELATIONS AND INFORMATION, THE SOVIET EMBASSY HAD BEEN PRESSING THE FBSI AND THE GOI FOR SOME TIME TO SEND A TRADE UNION DELEGATION TO THE CELEBRATIONS; HOWEVER, THE LATTER HAD BEEN DRAGGING ITS FEET AND THE FORMER WOULD NOT MAKE A MOVE WITHOUT EXPLICIT GOI APPROVAL. SOVIET DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER FIRYUBIN DURING HIS VISIT TO INDONESIA IN MARCH FURTHER PRESURED THE GOI TO APPROVE SENDING A DELEGATION, POINTING OUT THAT AN INDONESIAN DELEGATION HAD BEEN SENT LAST YEAR (TWO MEN ONLY) AND FAILURE TO DO SO THIS YEAR WOULD BE HARD TO UNDERSTAND IN VIEW OF THE PROFESSED DESIRE ON BOTH SIDES TO IMPROVE RELATIONS.

4. SUDONO AND SAMIL CLAIMED THE ARGUMENTS OF FORMER PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT ALI MURTOPO AND LT GEN YOGA SUGAMA, NEW COMMANDER OF BAKIN (INTELLIGENCE COORDINATION BOARD) CONVINCED PRESIDENT SUHARTO THAT A DELEGATION SHOULD BE SENT. THEY REPORTEDLY ARGUED THAT INDONESIA SHOULD BE CAREFUL TO TAKE A FRIENDLY STANCE TOWARD THE USSR AS IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY SOME DAY TO PLAY IT OFF AGAINST CHINA. SUHARTO THEN DECIDED A DELEGATION SHOULD BE SENT BUT THAT IT SHOULD BE HEADED BY SUDONO, WHOSE NAME HAD HITHERTO NOT BEEN NAMED IN THIS CONNECTION. SUDONO HAS BEEN FAVORABLY AND PERSONALLY KNOWN TO SUHARTO SINCE THE FORMER WAS ACTIVE WITH STUDENT ACTION GROUPS WORKING FOR THE OVERTHROW OF PRESIDENT SUKARNO AFTER THE ATTEMPTED COUP IN SEPTEMBER 1965.

5. SUDONO, WHILE FLATTERED BY THE NOMINATION AND ESIROUS OF SEEING MOSCOW, HAS MIXED EMOTIONS ABOUT HIS SLECTION BECAUSE HE FEELS IT WILL STRENGTHEN THE VIEWS OF THOSE INDONESIAN AND ICFTU-ARO LEADERS WHO FEEL THAT IS TOO CLOSE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT AND TOO MUCH OF A TOOL OF IT. ALSO, HE IS SCHEDULED

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TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE ICFTU ASIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN KUALA LUMPUR MAY 2-10.

6. IT WAS AGREED THAT SUDONO COULD LEAVE MOSCOW ON MAY 2 FOR KUALA LUMPUR WHILE THE REST OF THE DELEGATION COULD STAY ON IN MOSCOW FOR A FEW MORE DAYS, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING, HOWEVER, THAT IT SHOULD NOT MAKE ANY STATEMENTS, SIGN ANYTHING, OR DO ANYTHING ELSE THAT

THE ESTABLISHMENT WOULD REGARD AS CONTROVERSIAL. IT
CAN BE DEPENDED ON TO FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS.

7. AN INTERESTING SIDELIGHT OF THIS MATTER IS THE
ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE IT GIVES TO THOSE WHO ARGUE THAT
MURTOPO'S ADVICE IS STILL LISTENED TO BY THE PRESIDENT
AND THAT HE HAS A CLOSE AND GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH GENERAL
YOGA. IT IS ALSO INTERESTING AS FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT
YOGA HAS INFLUENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT AND THAT HE
IS TAKING AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN LABOR MOVEMENT MATTERS.
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